

WAGE INCREASES AT THE COLLIERIES IN NOVA SCOTIA.

Increases in wages have been gained by the mine workers employed by the Dominion Coal Company, both in Cape Breton and at the Springhill Mines, and by the employees of the Nova Scotia Steel & Coal Company at Sydney Mines.

The Provincial Workmen's Association and the Dominion Coal Company were unable to agree on the amount of the increase in wages that was required to adjust the diminution in the earning capacity of the workmen caused by the increase in the cost of living, and owing to the complicated situation occasioned by friction between the Provincial Workmen's Association and the United Mine Workers of Nova Scotia, the Minister of Labor declined the request of both these organizations, made at separate times, for Boards of Conciliation, and appointed a Royal Commission composed of the Honorable Mr. Justice Chisholm of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia, Rev. Dr. John Forrest of Dalhousie University, and Mr. John T. Joy, a member of the Workmen's Compensation Board of Nova Scotia.

This Commission, after hearing informally the representations of the workmen with reference to the increased cost of living, and also the representations of the company, gave as its finding the following memorandum of settlement, namely:

1. That ten cents a day be added to the wages of all workmen who are at present receiving wages up to and including \$2.50 per day.
2. That an increase of twelve and one-half per cent. be given to all workmen, including these mentioned in paragraph (1) hereof.
3. That said increase date from the first day of May, 1917.
4. This agreement shall continue in force until the 31st day of December, 1917, and from year to year thereafter, unless any of the parties hereto give notice of its termination two months prior to the expiration of any calendar year.

A resume of the increases in wages given to the workmen of the Dominion Coal Company since the first of June, 1916, may be of interest. At that date an increase of 6 per cent. to all workmen was given, followed in November, 1916, by a further increase of 14 per cent. In addition the Company is paying a "steady work" bonus of 5 per cent. on the earnings of all producers working 22 days out of each working period of 24 days.

At Springhill Mines the Dominion Coal Company have also given an increase in wages effective as in the case of the Glace Bay Mines, from May 1st. An increase of ten cents per day is given to men earning \$2.50 per day and under and in addition an increase of 10 per cent. is given to this and all other classes of mine labor.

The workmen at Springhill are not satisfied with the extent of the increase, and the duties of the Royal Commission were extended to cover a review of the situation at the Springhill Mines also, (and at the time of writing the Commission was in session at Springhill.

Before proceeding to Springhill the Commission investigated the relations between the Nova Scotia Steel & Coal Company and its workmen at Sydney Mines, where an increase of 30 per cent. had been asked by the employees. After hearing the representations of both parties, the Commission gave as its finding the following basis of settlement:

- Ordinary laborers, 12½ per cent. increase.
- Other classes from \$2.50 and under, 15 per cent. increase, including a number of hoisting engine men.
- All classes from \$2.50 to \$3.00, ten per cent. increase.
- All classes above \$3.00, 5 per cent. increase.
- Hand pick miners, 7½ per cent. increase.
- Shooters and loaders, 7½ per cent. increase.
- Machine runners, 5 per cent. increase.

To become effective May 7. All bonuses to be put on a flat rate. This award is to continue to 31st December, 1917, and from year to year thereafter until or unless two months' notice by either party before the expiration of any calendar year is given of intention to terminate the agreement.

The Commission devoted a considerable portion of its attention to the relations existing between the Provincial Workmen's Association and the United Mine Workers of Nova Scotia, and it is believed was able to persuade the leaders of the two organizations to agree to the establishment of a new organization intended to absorb the membership of the two existing bodies.

It is thought that the amalgamation recommended by the Commission will take place and that as a result a new union will be formed having an entirely different name, with new officers, and with its activities confined entirely to Nova Scotia under a Provincial charter.

It is yet too soon to say what the result will be, but those who favor amalgamation express much optimism.

ALIEN ENEMY COMPANIES.

An order-in-Council of May 8th, 1917, is as follows:

- "3. No company shall acquire or hold any of the rights, powers or benefits hereinbefore referred to if such company be an alien enemy company, or registered in an alien enemy country, or having its principal place of business within such country, or if the chairman of such company or any of the directors are subjects of an alien enemy country, or if such company is controlled, either directly or indirectly, by an alien enemy or alien enemies, or by an alien enemy corporation or alien enemy corporations.

"4. Any alteration in the memorandum of articles of association, or in the constitution, or in the laws of any company holding any rights, powers or benefits hereinafter referred to shall be reported by the proper officer of the company to the Minister of the Interior, and two months previous notice in writing shall be given to the Minister of the Interior of the intention to make any alteration which might conceivably, either directly or indirectly, affect the character, or control of any such company, and if, in the opinion of the Minister of the Interior, the said alteration shall be contrary to the cardinal principal that the said company shall be and remain a company not of alien enemy origin or control, the Minister of the Interior may refuse his consent to such alteration, and if his refusal is not obeyed, may declare such company to be an alien enemy company and may cancel the said rights, powers and benefits under the provisions of the next following regulation.

"5. If any company which has acquired any right, power or benefit hereinbefore referred to shall, at any time, become subject to the control of an alien enemy or alien enemies, or an alien enemy corporation or corporations, or shall assign any of the rights, powers or benefits aforesaid, without the consent in writing of the Minister of the Interior being first had and obtained, or if the said right, power and benefit has been acquired through error, misrepresentation or fraud,